

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2405

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IS, JO

SUBJECT: THE PLO AND THE WEST BANK

1. IN A LONG SPECULATIVE ARTICLE IN JULY 23 JERUSALEM POST, WOLF BLITZER CITING "AMERICAN EXPERTS" DESCRIBES HOW ARAFAT HAS LOST CONTROL AND PLO FORTUNES ARE AT A LOW EBB. BLITZER SAYS KING HUSSEIN IS SEEKING TO REGAIN HIS ROLE ON THE WEST BANK AND HAS URGED THE UNITED STATES NOT TO OPPOSE ASAD'S MOVES IN LEBANON. AS PLO IMPORTANCE HAS DECREASED, THE QUESTION HAS ARISEN AS TO WHO SPEAKS FOR THE WEST BANKERS AND BLITZER SPECULATES REGARDING THE ROLE OF THE NEW MAYORS.

2. BLITZER THEN WRITES "THE AMERICANS ARE PAYING CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE DEVELOPMENTS. THE AMERICAN CONSULATE IN JERUSALEM HAS BEEN ASKED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO REPORT EXTENSIVELY ON THE WEST BANK LEADERSHIP AND THE SHIFTING MOOD AND POLITICAL CLIMATE THERE.

3. "ARE THE NEW MAYORS MEETING REGULARLY? DO THEY HAVE A 'NATIONAL' APPROACH TO PROBLEMS FACING THEM? AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, DOES THE NEW WEST BANK LEADERSHIP REPRESENT
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A NEW 'PALESTINIAN' LEADERSHIP--A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE PLO?

4. "FINAL ANSWERS ARE NOT YET KNOWN. FIRST LEBANON WILL HAVE TO SIMMER DOWN. BUT WASHINGTON I WATCHING THE SITUATION CAREFULLY AND IF IT SEEMS THAT A NEW PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP HAS EMERGED ON THE WEST BANK, AND IS ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH ISRAEL AND JORDAN, THEN SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT MAY HAVE A CHANCE OF GETTING OFF THE GROUND."

5. THE EMBASSY AND THE CONSULATE GENERAL WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE TO HELP US IN RESPONDING TO ANY INQUIRIES.
DUNNIGAN

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